

MEDICAL PRACTICE ACTS.

For several years the American Medical Association has had in its employ experts who have been collecting all the various records in regard to the laws licensing the practice of medicine in all of the states and the decisions in the courts of law relating to such laws and various phases of their operation. The first volume of the legal department of the Association has just been printed. It is "Case Law on the Statutory Regulation of the Practice of Medicine." It may be had by addressing the American Medical Association, 535 North Dearborn Street, Chicago; the price is not stated. The book will be found invaluable to anyone who is interested in this subject of medical licensure, and for some years to come the subject will be of more or less interest. Eventually economic conditions will settle the whole matter, but that will take a number of years, in all probability. State medicine is approaching more rapidly than one would have thought would be the case, a few years ago.

DOCTORS AND CHARITY.

To say that the physicians of a community contribute more to charitable work than all the charitable organizations in that community combined, is to make a safely conservative statement of fact. Every physician knows that he will do a certain percentage of his work for which he will never receive any return whatever. All physicians are ready and willing at all times to advise on matters of public health, protection against threatened epidemics, and the like, or to give their actual services and time and effort for the public health of the people of the community in which they find themselves. It is ingrained in medical education and a fixed part of medical life. In view of these facts it has always seemed to the writer that for laymen to ask physicians to contribute in money toward the support of various charitable enterprises, was a sociologic blunder if not an impertinence. The conduct of public health movements, as the war upon tuberculosis, the study and prevention of cancer, and the like, are matters of primary interest *to the community as such* and their maintenance should be a community burden. If it is not assumed by the community, it should be assumed by the lay citizens; their part should be the contribution of necessary funds, whereas the portion of the physician is the contribution of his knowledge, his brains, his nerve force, his time and his physical energies—all of which overbalance anything the lay citizens may contribute. The following letters are appended without much further comment except to say that no matter how tremendously valuable the work of the San Francisco Association for the Study and Prevention of Tuberculosis may be, it is impertinent for that,

or any other similar association, to ask physicians to contribute of their scanty means, to such financial support:

THE SAN FRANCISCO ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY AND PREVENTION OF TUBERCULOSIS

August 12, 1915.

Dr. P. M. Jones,
San Francisco.

My Dear Doctor:—

As a physician you will appreciate the necessity of our making an appeal for funds to carry on the campaign against tuberculosis in San Francisco.

Following are some of the things we can do this Fall with your assistance:

Increase our free visiting nurse service.

Extend the free clinic service.

Provide for tuberculous and physically sub-normal children.

Wage a campaign of education.

The pamphlet we are sending you, under separate cover, outlines some of the measures which we believe should be in force in this city, and we trust will meet with your approval.

We wish to emphasize that we are using every precaution to avoid interfering with the practice of the private physician. Our aim is to render nursing and clinic service, only when it may be desirable or necessary. We want your moral and financial support.

Very sincerely yours,

JESSE W. LILIENTHAL,
President.

DIXON VAN BLARCOM,
General Secretary.

A. H. GIANNINI,
Executive Secretary.

MRS. WILLIAM HAAS,
Chairman Membership Committee.

WILLIAM C. VOORSANGER,
Chairman Education Committee.

August 14th, 1915.

Mr. Jesse W. Lilienthal,
President, San Francisco Association for the Study and Prevention of Tuberculosis, Flood Building, San Francisco.

Dear Sir:

Today I am in receipt of a circular letter dated August 12th and signed in facsimile of your name as President of the Association for the Study and Prevention of Tuberculosis. The circular is addressed to physicians and asks them to contribute funds toward the support of your Association and its wonderfully good work.

May I be permitted to suggest that appealing to physicians for financial support of public health matters is sociologically wrong? Physicians give more of their time, brains, energy and life to charitable work than do all the charitable organizations and all the private citizens charitably inclined in the community. In this very work of the Association of which you are President, a number of physicians are cheerfully giving of their time and energy vastly more than the contributors in coin.

I do not wish any word of mine to be construed as in the slightest degree belittling the work of your Association; it is marvelously good work. But it is public health work, and public health work should be supported either by the community as such, or by the lay members thereof who cannot help in the scientific and professional work but who can contribute in dollars. If I am wrong in this contention, I would very much like to be set right.

If you have no objection to my doing so, I would like to publish your circular and a copy of this letter in our Journal.

Respectfully yours,

PHILIP MILLS JONES.